

A NEW PHILOSOPHY OF SEX IDENTITY

by

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INTRODUCTION

During the past two years, while studying the history of Western concepts of woman and man, it has been my good fortune to give several lectures on this subject to various audiences in Washington DC and Montreal, Quebec. In spite of the fact that my work has primarily focused on the philosophical dimensions of human identity I have been continuously surprised by the interest which this subject has aroused in people with little or no philosophical training. Educators, psychologists, historians, artists, writers, and theologians have reacted with interest to the basic theory of sex identity which I am proposing. In addition, they have urged me to write a description of this theory which would be accessible to others within their perspective fields of study.

When this request for what might be called a 'popular version' of my work first appeared, I immediately refused to consider it. My reasons for this reaction were rooted in a basic intuition that it was important to convince philosophers of the truth of my views first and only then to turn to a wider audience. I felt that if a simplified version of my theory were published without careful qualifications and historical justifications, ~~that~~ it might be exposed to a simple refutation and buried "still born from the press."

The search for a correct philosophical theory of sex identity has occupied me for the last fiveteen years, since 1967. During this time I have made forays into conferences and journals with preliminary, but inadequate, formulations of the theory. It was only when I was able to devote two full years of study to the subject that I began to uncover what I believe is a fruitful method

for approaching the concept of woman in relation to man. This research into the history of philosophy proved to be so rich that at the end of this time I was able only to complete a text which traced the development of the subject through the classical and medieval periods in western thought. This work, entitled The Concept of Woman from 700 BC to 1300 AD: The Aristotelian Revolution, is a careful study of early philosophical arguments for different theories of sex identity. Its usefulness to scholars and philosophers, however, demands a degree of technicality that may make it somewhat inaccessible to a wider audience.

It is obvious that several more years will be required to complete the research which was left at the fourteenth century in the above text. It is for this reason that I have reconsidered my original reticence about turning to a 'popular' version of the theory. There is a great amount of interest in the subject today. To wait until the entire project is completed would be to lose an opportunity to interject what I believe is an important element missing from contemporary debate.

Therefore, the following text is presented as an arrow, pointing towards a specific approach to sex identity. It is meant to offer a way of access to the subject rather than a definitive formulation of a completed theory. I hope that it will stimulate thought in such a way that the philosophy of sex identity will once again become central to the wide range of discussions concerning women and men in the contemporary world.

In the first chapter of this book I present three basic theories of sex identity which have appeared in one form or another in the history of philosophy. I also try to develop a contemporary foundation from which to evaluate the theories.

In the second chapter I consider an issue which has been central to sex identity since it was first considered by philosophers. Fertility, and our response to it in concrete

human relations, are invaluable sources of information about the identity of woman in relation to man.

In the third chapter I consider the relation between education and sex identity. How does our theory of sex identity affect the content of the education we offer?

In the fourth chapter I consider the practical question of the effect of a theory of sex identity on conceptions of justice and the law.

Finally, in the fifth chapter I reaffirm one theory of sex identity over the others.

The above issues, having all been considered by traditional philosophers, spring out of an important historical context. However, they are being considered today by many people who have had no acquaintance with the history of philosophy. Therefore, they are also of major contemporary significance. There are, of course, many other ways that the issue of sex identity can be creatively approached. In this light, this particular book must be received merely as one example of how a philosopher might consider the relation between woman and man.

CHAPTER I

Sex Unity, Polarity, or Complementarity?

It might be ^{thought} ~~said~~ that there are as many different theories of sex identity as there are people in the world! This view reflects the richness ⁱⁿ ~~of the variety of~~ ^{ways} that men and women have thought about their relationship through the centuries. At the same time, a careful analysis of ~~the ways in which~~ theories of sex identity ~~have actually been expressed~~ reveals that they ^{tend to} ~~fall~~ ^{into} three general categories which can be called sex unity, sex polarity, and sex complementarity. These categories ^{should} ~~must~~ be taken as loose guidelines, rather than as rigid models for theories of sex identity.

There are two key concepts which help to delineate the three above mentioned theories: equality and differentiation. For each theory we can ask: Does it claim that women and men are equal? Does it claim that women and men are significantly different? By combining the two concepts we discover that discussions about sex identity have, generally speaking, evolved in the following ways:

Sex Unity: This theory claims that women and men are equal, and that they are not significantly different. In contemporary discussion, it is often referred to as the "unisex" theory.

A derivative form of sex unity can be called Sex Neutrality. It also assumes that women and men are equal and not significantly different. However, it differs from sex unity in that it ignores the differences between the sexes rather than argue directly for the equality of woman and man.

Sex Polarity: This theory claims both that women and men are significantly different and that men are superior to women.

A derivative form of sex polarity can be called Reverse Sex Polarity. This theory agrees that women

and men are significantly different but it argues that women are superior to men.

Sex Complementarity: This theory claims that women and men are significantly different and that they are equal.

Using the two factors of differentiation and equality, the following chart reveals the basic structure of the above theories:

	Differentiation	Equality
Sex Unity	-----	X
Sex Neutrality	-----	X
Sex Polarity	X	-----
Reverse Sex Polarity	X	-----
Sex Complementarity	X	X

Since sex unity and sex neutrality share the same categories of equality and non differentiation they can be considered as ~~similar theories~~ ^{the same} theory of sex identity. In the same way sex polarity and reverse sex polarity reveal a common theory of sex identity. Therefore, we can propose the tentative view that philosophical theories of sex identity tend to fall into three broad categories when they are evaluated in terms of equality and differentiation. These categories are defined as sex unity, polarity, and complementarity.

In the history of philosophy all of the above theories have appeared in different forms. Sex polarity in its traditional form received its first comprehensive defence by Aristotle (384-322 BC). It was reasserted by St. Thomas Aquinas (1224-1274), Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778), and Sigmund Freud (1856-1939). It has been the dominate form of philosophical theory of sex identity until this century.

Reverse sex polarity made its first appearance in the writings of the philosopher Henrich Cornelius Agrippa (1486-1536). It was reasserted by ^{the contemporary philosophers} Ashley Montagu (p. 1953) and Mary Daly (p. 1973 and 1978). It has become the dominate theory of sex identity for the radical feminist coalition of the contemporary woman's movement.

Sex unity has also had its articulate defenders. Plato (428-355 BC) first argued for its validity. It was later reasserted by Porphyry (235-305), Marie le Jars de Gournay (1566-1645), Anna Maria van Schurman (1607-1678), Poulain de la Barre (1647-1723), Karl Marx (1818-1883), and the contemporary writers Allison Jaggar (p. 1976), and Shulamith Firestone (p. 1970). Sex unity has become the main theory of sex identity proposed by the marxist feminist coalition of the contemporary woman's movement.


It is also held by many other feminists who believe that the equality of the sexes can only be achieved by the disappearance of ~~the~~ any significant differentiation between women and men.

Sex neutrality made its introduction into philosophy relatively late in western history. It appeared only after logic had been formally integrated into academic philosophy in the thirteenth century. At this time philosophers began to think that their discipline ought only to concentrate on definitions of species. This focus on the human, rather than on the male or female, meant that theories of sex identity were no longer thought to be philosophical. ^{of significance} The close association of philosophy with logic was further reinforced by ^{the} move to establish philosophy on mathematical principles in the seventeenth century. With the European rationalists such as Descartes (1595-1657), Leibniz (1648-1716), and Spinoza (1632-1677) sex neutrality became established as the commonly accepted theory of sex identity. In the contemporary philosophical movements such as phenomenology, analytic philosophy, linguistic analysis, and pragmatism sex neutrality prevails.

Sex complementarity has also had its defenders. Empedocles (490-430 BC) offered ~~a~~ first tentative statement of its principle themes. The theory was not given a more formal development until Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179). Later, ~~on~~ Mary Astell (1668-1731) and Mary Wollstonecraft (1757-1797) ^{have} ^{defended} sought to ~~redefine~~ sex complementarity. John Stuart Mill (1806 - 1873), Carl Jung (1875 - 1961), and Edith Stein (1891 - 1942), also sought to develop a theory of the significant differentiation and equality of the two sexes. Finally contemporary theorists within the women's movement such as Betty Friedan (p. 1963, 1976), Jessie Bernard (p. 1972, 1975), and Rosemary Ruether (p. 1975, 1978) appear to assume a complementarity model of sex identity.

The above brief description of the historical appearance of various theories of sex identity leaves out many important philosophers. However, it accurately reflects, I think, the most important theorists in the particular area of sex identity. It demonstrates that the question of the equality and differentiation of woman and man has preoccupied philosophers for centuries. Therefore, the impression which is often given by the entrenchment of sex neutrality within centers for the academic study of philosophy, namely that sex identity is not a philosophical issue, is misleading.

Furthermore, ~~outsidet of academic philosophy's movement~~ another misleading impression frequently occurs. Here debate about sex identity often gets trapped in a false either/or of either sex unity or ~~reverse~~ sex polarity. The basic issue here is the underlying belief (or fear) that any differentiation between the sexes will lead to the superior valuation of one sex over the other. Inversely, this view is expressed as the claim that equality will be achieved only when all differences between the sexes are abolished.

Philosophers within the women's movement have argued strongly for the principles of sex unity or for those of reverse sex polarity. No ^{feminist} philosopher has yet offered strong arguments for sex complementarity. While theologians, sociologists, and other writers have often assumed the validity of the model of sex complementarity which I have proposed, namely of the need to defend both equality and significant differentiation of men and women, they have not yet developed an adequate philosophical foundation for this view. In addition, it is recognized that theorists in this tradition ^{earlier} were limited in their attempts to find a proper philosophical foundation for sex complementarity. 

← It is within this context then that a strong philosophical argument needs to be put forward for the theory of sex complementarity. It is needed ~~as a~~^{to} balance ~~for~~ the false dichotomy of sex unity vs. sex polarity. Indeed, it is needed as the way out of the labyrinth of incorrect views about the proper relation of woman and man.

A careful examination of arguments ~~about sex identity~~ which were put forward in the history of philosophy may offer a clue to the most effective method for approaching the issue today. Historically, philosophers approached the question of the respective identities of woman and man through asking

go to p 4.

four questions:

1. What do woman and man contribute to generation?
2. Are women and men wise in the same way?
3. Are women and men virtuous in the same way?
4. How are women and men opposite?

The answers which traditional philosophers gave these questions were influenced by the scientific data available to them, by their own intellectual schema, and by the social conditions of their times. The questions they asked, however, seem to transcend a particular time and place. They point to fundamental categories of human existence. Therefore, even though we might want to reject many of the answers which various philosophers gave to these questions, the questions themselves can be considered central to any search for the truth about sex identity.

To be more precise, it can be seen that the above four questions reflect our material, thinking, and acting nature as woman or man. In addition, they bring into focus our relation to one another as well as to the world. It would seem, then, that an effective method for developing a philosophical defence of sex complementarity ^{might} ~~would~~ be to reflect again on these fundamental questions in order to determine whether our own contemporary scientific data, intellectual schema, and social conditions can offer a ^{more} solid foundation from which to defend the equality and differentiation of women and men.

What do women and men contribute to generation?

The invention of the microscope has allowed us to discover that women as well as men contribute active seed to generation. In addition,

both contributions contain half of the needed structure of the newly conceived embryo. These material givens of our human situation directly contradict centuries of sex polarity arguments which claimed that the woman provided only passive material to generation. The modern discovery of active female seed thus repudiated one of the fundamental defences of traditional sex polarity. In addition, the contemporary recognition of the equally active participation of male and female seed in reproduction supports the theory of the basic equality of woman and man in this activity.

It is important to note the further point that reflection on generation also reveals a significant differentiation between woman and man. For, even though each sex provides half of the necessary structure of the new life, it is not possible for two contributions from the same sex to have the same result, i.e. two female seeds or two male seeds will not be able to generate a child. Another way of saying this is that the two contributions must have a differentiated route of access, a different pathway, one provided by the male and the other by the female. Therefore, merely by considering the barest facts about generation, we have found an initial support for the two basic premises of sex complementarity, namely that the two sexes are equal and significantly different. Their equality is derived from the chromosomal structure of the seed, and their differentiation is derived from the respective pathways that the seeds follow.

Are women and men wise in the same way?

Without describing the nature of wisdom in detail, we can say that

it involves at least the capacity to think or reason well. When we reflect on what we know about the thinking capacities of women and men today, once again we find an interesting shift in scientific knowledge from what had been believed in the past. It has often been argued, although never proven, that women and men have different reasoning capacities. Philosophers in the sex polarity tradition have claimed that men were superior because of their capacity for discursive reasoning, and now theorists from the reverse sex polarity tradition argue that women are superior because of their capacity for intuitive thinking. There has been no scientific evidence which shows that one sex or the other, by virtue of its sex, is limited either to discursive or to intuitive reasoning. In fact, it is become more clear that women and men have potentially the same capacity for discursive and intuitive thinking. It would seem to follow from this, then, that women and men are equal with respect to their reasoning capacities.

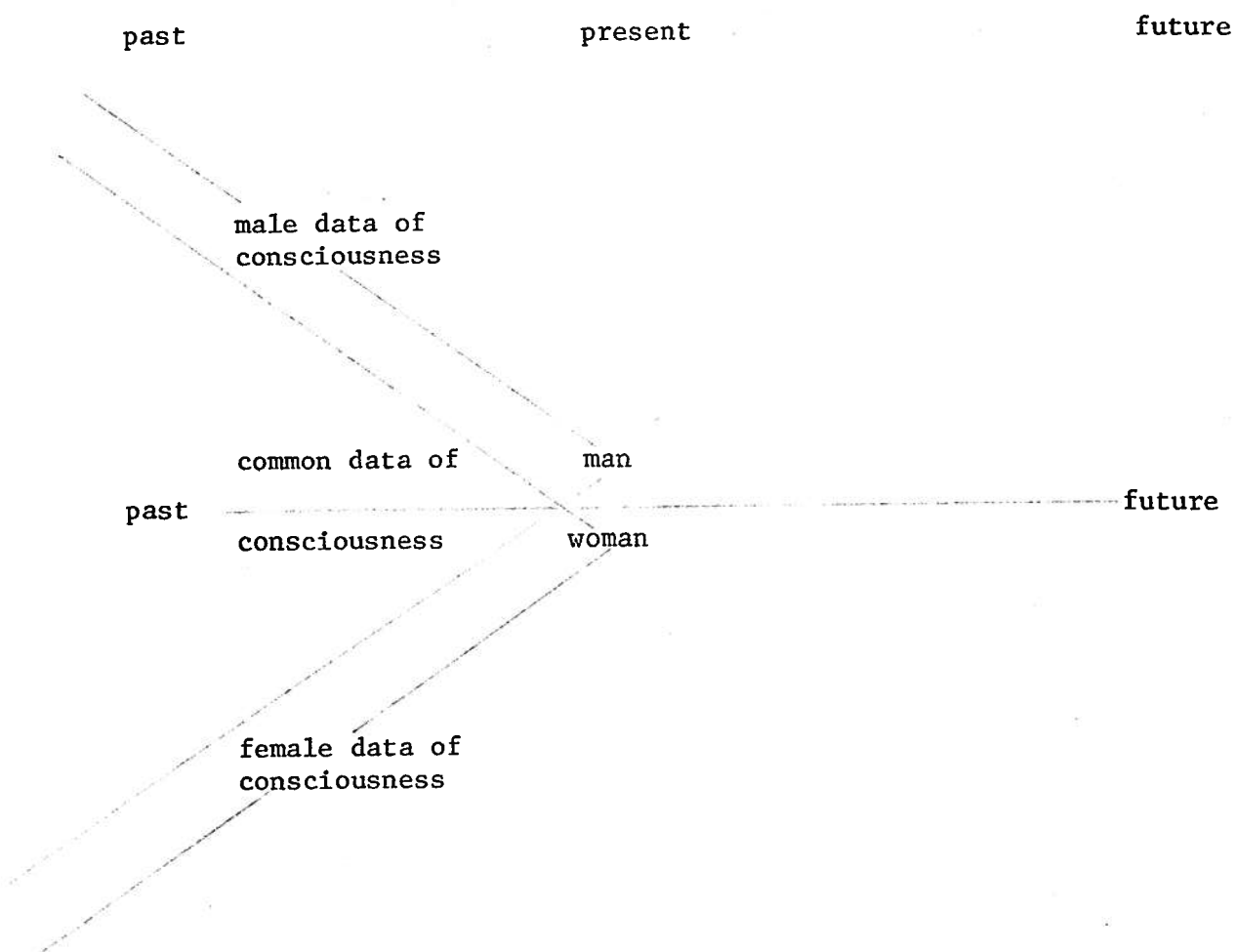
Sex unity theorists often imply that wisdom demands a complete lack of differentiation between women and men as reflected in language and in thought. They seek to remove all words with sex differentiation from language, to change institutional structures so that no differentiation between the sexes will be possible, and to change physical appearance so that no differentiation between the sexes will be visible. The sex unity theorists conclude from the equality of the capacity for reasoning in women and men, that the thought content of the two sexes is, or should be, sexually non-differentiated. This argument, however, neglects one important fact. Although the reasoning capacity is the same for women and men, the

content of consciousness is different in a number of significant respects.

The difference between the content of thought for woman and man is drawn from their relation to a specific kind of body, to a specific recent past (since their birth), and to a specific inherited past (within their culture). This means that when a person thinks about his or her own identity, the data which is available to his/her mind is different. We could say that the pathway of information differs according to sex. The lived experience of the body is different for a man than it is for a woman; being brought up in the western world as female or male brings to consciousness an entirely different range of data; being born into a world of stereotypes, archetypes, and historical facts provides a different range of information for a man's reason to appropriate as a specific history than for a woman. Therefore, we can say that reflection on the different data available to the reason of woman and man points to a significant differentiation between the sexes.

This difference in data of consciousness for woman and man does not deny that there may be a large range of common data for individual women and men. There are a great many other factors, such as race, religion, class, domicile, etc. to consider. Therefore, while there is a common bond of data for women and men with similar historical situations, each person has a small band of data for consciousness which is specifically related to sex differentiation. A visual summary of this explanation is found in Diagram I below.

The question originally posed by this essay concerned whether or not women and men are wise in the same way. Wisdom involves, among other

Diagram I

things, using the reason well. It would seem to follow, then, that in terms of having the same capacities for reasoning, women and men are wise in the same way, but that in terms of the particular kind of data they reason about, women and men are wise in a different way. It would seem, then, that this initial consideration of the way in which a person aims towards wisdom supports the two basic claims of sex complementarity, that women and men are equal, but significantly different.

Are women and men virtuous in the same way?

Once again, without giving a philosophical explanation for the origin and nature of virtue, it can at least be said that virtue involves an ability to act well. Reflection on virtue, then, raises the question: do women and men have the same or different capacities for action?

In order to answer this question it is useful to understand action as involving the three phases of assessment, decision making, and forward movement. It has been argued by theorists in the sex polarity tradition that women have a different capacity for assessing situations than men. For example, it has been suggested that women merely have opinions while men have knowledge, or that women jump to conclusions while men consider things more carefully. In a similar way, it has also been argued that women are not capable of making decisions, because their emotions overpower their reason. Certainly, contemporary experience has shown that women as well as men have the same potential for assessing what needs to be done in the world, for deciding what they ought to do, and for carrying this decision forward in action. In short, it is becoming increasingly clear that women and men have a similar capacity for action.

However, does this similarity of capacity imply that women and men ought to do the same things? Sex unity theorists would conclude that it does. They argue that the similarity of acting capacity, or ability to shape the world, demands a rigorous effort to get rid of anything that hinders a person because of his or her sex. In the extreme, it is suggested that all differences in biological contexts for action should be eliminated through the introduction of the test tube baby. The sex unity theorists, in this way, view male or female identity as something to be gotten rid of.

It seems, however, that while it may be correct to argue for the equality of the acting capacity of women and men, that there is also an important difference in context for action given to woman and man. Therefore, just as the fact that the two sexes have the same reasoning capacity is compatible with the conclusion that they have a different context of consciousness, so, the fact that the two sexes have the same acting capacity is compatible with the conclusion that woman and man may have a significantly different context for action in many situations. Therefore, women and men under certain conditions ought to act differently.

If we take two traditional virtues associated with the two sexes, a different historical context will emerge. Two of the inheritances of western patriarchal society are the following moral claims:

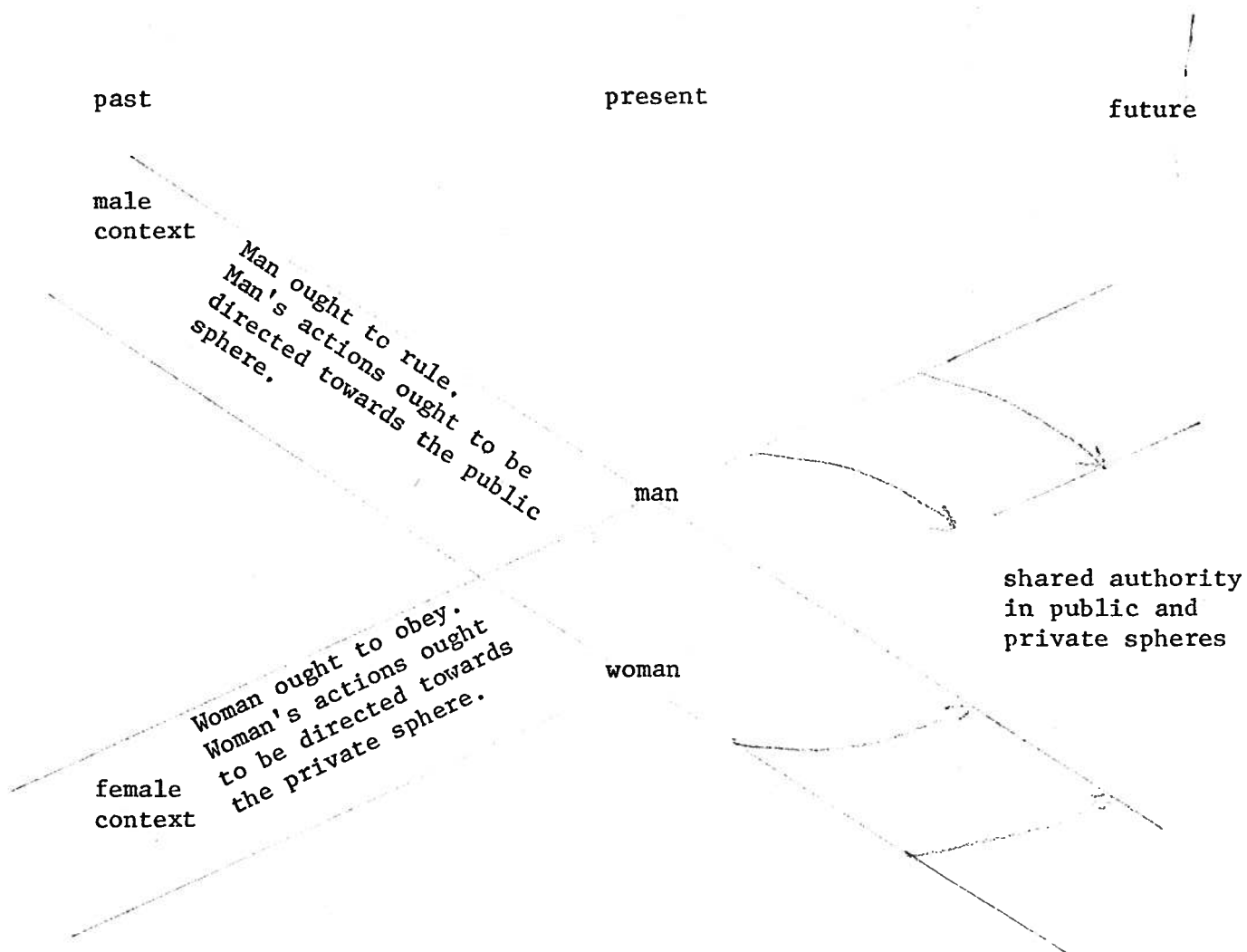
Men ought to rule and women to obey.

Man's actions ought to be directed towards the public sphere and woman's actions ought to be directed towards the private sphere.

One of the basic assumptions of sex complementarity, as I understand it,

involves an aim to develop are shared authority of woman and man in both public and private spheres of activity. Sex complementarity claims that women and men bear equal responsibility for the quality of life at home and in society in general. However, the way in which they approach the goal will differ in some respects because of their different historical and contemporary contexts. That is, women and men have a different pathway of access to the same goal. In Diagram II below this difference is visualized.

Women and men today inherit different contexts for action because patriarchal society in the western world embodies the basic views expressed through the sex polarity theory. A woman with an inheritance of patriarchy has a different context for action from a man with an inheritance of patriarchy. From Diagram II it can be seen that women inherit a context for action in which it is considered virtuous for her to obey man, while man's virtue is associated with ruling. This means that if there is a common goal of society to move towards shared authority, it might be more virtuous for a woman to practice the skills of ruling in assuming authority in a particular context and more virtuous for a man to practice the skills of obeying in sharing authority, than the other way around. Therefore, an assumption of leadership could be understood as a virtuous act for a woman and the abdication of leadership for a man in the same situation. The man would be virtuous precisely by not ruling, but by electing to follow, while the woman would be virtuous in the same situation by attempting to rule and giving up the position of follower. Therefore, the different pathways of access to the same situation lead to the choice

Diagram II

of different virtuous actions for the woman than for the man.

Another example of the same phenomenon can be seen in an analysis of the second context mentioned in Diagram II. Patriarchy has often left the legacy that a woman ought to practice her virtues primarily in the home, while a man ought to practice his virtues primarily in society at large. Sex complementarity, as I have defined it, seeks to make women and men aware of their responsibility in both the public and private spheres of activity. It could follow from this, that a woman or a man might be virtuous by performing the opposite act in the same situation. A very practical application of this principle may be seen in a consideration of housework. In this context it might be virtuous for a man to do a particular task in the house just as it could be virtuous for the woman not to do the same task in order to allow the man the opportunity to assume his responsibility in the private sphere. Similarly, in the public sphere it could be virtuous for a man to withhold his opinions and actions in the same context in which it would be virtuous for a woman to speak out and act. Once again, the particular action must be understood in terms of the context in which women and men inherit because of the history of their particular sex.

It must be mentioned in passing that these examples are not meant to apply to all women and men without exception. Obviously, individuals have a variety of other factors which influence their contexts of actions. There are, for instance, women who have all their lives been able to take leadership positions in public life without any difficulty, and there are men who have equally shared in responsibility in the private sphere.

These persons, however, are the exceptions in our society. A philosophy of sex complementarity ought to be established upon the common context of women and men. Therefore, the exceptions ought to be properly understood within the broader framework of the general pattern of activity common to both sexes.

It must also be emphasized that the above examples are not meant to imply that in all situations women ought to lead and men to follow, or that in all respects women ought to move into the public sphere of activity and men into the private sphere of activity. On the contrary, the goal is to have a society in which authority is shared by women and men in all areas of life. The sex unity theory would agree with the goal of shared authority, but would claim that it makes no difference whether the people involved in the authority are male or female. The sex polarity theory, on the other hand, would argue that men ought to have the primary authority. The reverse sex polarity ^{theory} argues sometimes that women ought to have the primary authority, and other times that there ought not to be any authority in society. Sex complementarity insists that the equality of women and men demands a society with shared authority, but that the sharing of authority by significantly different kinds of persons will be reflected in a creative dynamism which this difference unleashes. Women generally approach authority from a different pathway from men in both the private and public spheres of activity.

In this brief consideration, the two examples mentioned are enough to indicate the application of the basic theory of sex complementarity to the context of virtuous activity. We have seen in the study of virtue

that there is an equality in capacity for action and a differentiation in contexts for action which are present in women and men. Therefore, once again the two basic premises of sex complementarity, equality and differentiation have been demonstrated.

How are women and men opposite?

Historically, the question of the kind of opposition of the sexes has been phrased in a number of different ways. As early as 500 B.C., in the Pythagorean table of opposites, the question was posed in terms of the opposition of male and female. Later on, in the 19th century, philosophers were more interested in the opposition of the masculine and feminine. Today, I am posing the question in terms of the opposition of woman and man. The reason for this particular formulation is due to a central emphasis upon the concept of person. The opposition of male and female included the sexual differentiation of a wide variety of animals, while the opposition of masculine and feminine concentrated instead upon qualities of character. Only the sexual opposition between women and men concentrates on their identities as persons.

The first claim of sex complementarity, that women and men are equal, arises in and through their identity as persons. This inherent quality of dignity and worth is the natural birthright of each boy or girl, present even if everyone who receives a child into the world devalues it in relation to the opposite sex. It is also present even if experiences in the world twist and destroy any visible trace of this fact in a particular way in which the individual person's character develops. It follows, then, that the world ought to be reformed in such a way that

this basic equality of woman and man would be rendered visible within it at every possible opportunity.

The second claim of sex complementarity, that women and men are significantly different, arises in and through their inheritance as different kinds of persons. Rational consciousness, the particular gift of human life, reveals this difference. Women and men are significantly different in their most important human activities. This difference has been characterized as a difference in pathways to the world. In generation, these were given the physical description in observing the way in which female seed and male seed travel to meet one another for conception. In wisdom, these were given a thought-oriented description in the specific delineation of sex-related data of consciousness. In virtue, these were given an action-oriented description in interpreting the different contexts of woman and man.

It is possible, now, to summarize the ways in which this consideration of generation, wisdom, and virtue has produced strong evidence for the philosophy of sex complementarity.

	<u>Equality</u>	<u>Differentiation</u>
<u>Generation</u>	The seed of woman and man have the same basic structure.	The seed of woman and man approach one another from a different pathway.
<u>Wisdom</u>	Women and men have the same capacities for thought.	Women and men have different pathways of data for thought.
<u>Virtue</u>	Women and men can have the same capacities for action.	Women and men have different pathways or contexts for action.

It would seem to follow that there are as good reasons to support sex

complementarity as there are to support either sex unity or sex polarity.

It has not yet been proven that sex complementarity is a better theory than sex unity or sex polarity, although I certainly believe that this is the case. A proof can be demonstrated for the superiority of sex complementarity over the other two views; such a proof demands a more thorough explanation of the concept of person as comprised of a specific materiality, rationality, ~~spirituality~~, and individuality.

Within a more elaborate framework it would be possible to show that sex unity and sex polarity neglect some of the central aspects of the person, which sex complementarity preserves. Sex complementarity will be shown to be a more inclusive and more fertile theory than the other two alternatives. ^{Since} Within the limits of the present ^{Chapter} ~~paper~~, it is not possible to construct such a proof; we will rest here with the conclusion that sex complementarity can be ^{suggested} ~~defended~~ as a way out of the false 'either/or' of sex polarity versus sex unity.

~~Finally,~~ ^{For} those who are interested in finding a third alternative to sex unity or sex polarity, it ~~would be~~ ^{is} useful to attempt to apply the basic claims of sex complementarity to specific contexts of your own lives. For example, how might sex complementarity be applied in legal debate, ~~in research~~, in institutions, in the home? In each case, we can ask: "How can I help to aid equality and appropriate differentiation of women and men? How can I support differentiation without losing equality?" Sex complementarity ultimately must be defended, not only upon philosophical grounds, but in the very lives of individual women and men around the world.

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CHAPTER II

Fertility and Sex Identity

The relation between woman and man has usually involved some reference to their potentiality for generating new life. The fact that children issue forth from human parents has always been recognized as one fundamental characteristic of human identity. Species beget members of the same species. At the same time, the way in which generation occurs has frequently been misunderstood. Indeed, it might be said without too much exaggeration that the misunderstanding of fertility and generation has been one of the most serious problems in the history of sex identity.

The misunderstanding of the role of woman and of man in generation is historically connected with the three different theories of sex identity which I have called sex polarity, sex unity, and sex complementarity. While this link does not admit of a one to one correspondence between a theory of sex identity and a theory of generation, it is none the less an important factor in concepts of woman and man. In particular, the theory of sex polarity promoted by Aristotle led to twenty centuries of devaluation of the woman's contribution to generation. It interpreted woman as infertile in relation to man.

History of theories of generation.

As soon as western philosophers began to reflect on the nature of woman and man, the question of their respective contribution to generation was raised. Hesiod (750 BC) in the Theogony described a cosmic earth mother who by herself gave birth to the primary elements of the world. The belief that woman alone generated, without any contribution of man, is thought by some historians to have existed alongside of reverse sex polarity. This belief in an early period of the superiority of

woman over man is often described as a period of 'matriarchy' in the west. However, this is considered by many other historians to be a highly contentious claim. There appears to be no way to verify the authenticity of an early historical period of matriarchy even though it is supported by many nineteenth and twentieth century theorists. For our purposes it is important only to note that this ~~theory of sex identity~~ ~~was accompanied~~ by a corresponding theory of fertility. The belief in the superiority of woman within the framework of reverse sex polarity was accompanied by a neglect of man's contribution to generation.

Two hundred years after Hesiod, several Greek philosophers began to ask more specific questions about generation. Among other issues considered was whether both women and men provided seed for the child. The philosopher's suggestions covered a range of possibilities. Hippocrates (460-377 BC) and Democritus (460-370 BC) suggested that the mother and father each had a seed which contained the whole child. The resulting generation depended upon which parent's seed gained dominance. This result was thought to occur through a combination of factors such as which side of the uterus the seed attached itself to, which side of the testicles it came from, whether it was hot or cold, or whether the seed of the mother or father had greater internal strength.

The accepted contemporary theory, that each parent's seed provides one-half of the child was proposed by the two philosophers Parmenides (539-500 BC) and Empedocles (490-430 BC). Once again the factors of heat and position were important to the explanation of which sex the child would become. However, the basic view that both parents were equally fertile and that both parents' contribution were equally necessary was clearly stated by the fourth century BC.

The pre-Socratic philosophers did not develop a detailed theory of sex identity. Instead, as far as fragments of their writings reveal, they left suggestions of thoughts which were most likely based on intuition rather than scientific research. Loosely speaking, it could be said that among these early philosophers Democritus articulated a theory of sex polarity and Empedocles a theory of sex complementarity.

Sex unity made its first appearance in Plato (428-355 BC). In the Republic he argued that men and women were equal and essentially the same. This interpretation is complicated, however, by the fact that in the Timaeus Plato draws an analogy between a passive (prime) matter and a mother who receives the forms which enter into her like seeds from a father. Since Plato considers the forms to be superior to matter, it would appear that he values fathering more than mothering.

Plato gives little attention to the question of how generation works, so it is difficult to know whether he thought woman provided seed to this activity. The above metaphor of the passive mother receptacle might imply that he considered women to be primarily passive in generation. It is difficult to know, however, whether an analogy can be properly drawn from a cosmic mother receptacle to individual women. Plato may have been thinking of the receptive anatomy of woman during intercourse rather than of the generative process itself when he invented his metaphor of the mother receptacle.

Plato's theory of sex unity was founded primarily on the metaphysical concept of reincarnation. This view held that the soul, which was neither male or female, could be born into the bodies of men, women, and even animals. Since human identity was established by the quality of the soul without regard to the sex of the body, women and men were basically the same. It might be argued

that Plato defended a theory of sex polarity in the Timaeus when he stated that men who were cowardly or immoral were likely to be born as women in the next generation. However, although Plato certainly reflected a patriarchal mentality towards the actual living situation of women and men at the time he was writing, he argued strongly in the Republic and the Laws that women and men have the same potentiality for perfection.

It must be recognized that the link between reincarnation and the theory of sex unity is only implicit in Plato's philosophy. The closest he comes to openly defending this link is when he argues in the Republic that if a woman and a man have the same type of soul, i.e, that of a physician, carpenter, or philosopher, then their nature ~~was~~^{is} the same. The implicit link between reincarnation and sex unity was finally made explicit by the neo-Platonist Porphyry (235-305) in a letter to his wife Marcella. Porphyry argued that because the soul was neither male or female, and because the soul can be born in a woman or in a man, the two sexes were equal and not significantly different.

On the question of the relation between early theories of sex unity and the nature of female seed, it appears that Plato did not give much thought to the subject. It might be said that his general devaluation of the body and of the material world make this subject uninteresting philosophically. For Plato, the key to generation rested with the reincarnation of the soul, therefore, he might not have thought that the issue of seed was central to this process. Porphyry, on the other hand, devoted an entire work Pros Gauron to the question of generation. Significantly, he gave women and men equally formative roles in the process. It might be argued then that ~~his~~^{he recognized that the} theory of sex unity demanded an equality in generation, that is, if women and men are equal, then this equality ought to be evident at the heart of their sexual interaction.

Western history would have taken a rather different path of development if the double seed theory originally proposed by Empedocles had become accepted as correct by classical and medieval philosophers. However, Aristotle gave a new turn to thought about this issue. He decided that women contributed no seed at all to generation, they provided only the material which the seed of man formed into a child. Aristotle also provided the first elaborate theory to explain the relation of generation to sex identity in the Generation of Animals. He drew conclusions from this biological treatise in his Ethics, Politics, and Metaphysics. The systematic way in which Aristotle defended a new foundation for sex polarity overturned the more intuitive pronouncements about a double seed theory which had been supported by the pre-Socratics.

Aristotle argued that the nature of the female was colder than that of the male. As a consequence, the female was not able to provide enough heat to concoct seed. Aristotle concluded that woman was a defective and imperfect man. He went so far as to suggest that a female fetus occurred only because of some defect in the material provided by the mother or in the seed provided by the father. If no ~~defect~~ were present the a male child who resembled the father would be produced.

Aristotle's biological foundation for the theory of sex polarity did not become immediately accepted in western thought. In De rerum natura the Epicurian philosopher Lucretius (98-55 BC) reasserted the double seed theory of conception. Later the stoic philosopher Galen (131-201) reaffirmed the presence of a female seed. However, when Galen's thought is carefully studied it becomes clear that he considered the seed of woman to be infertile, he confused it with a glandular secretion which occurs during ovulation.

Early medieval thought was very much influenced by Galen's medical writings. Galen in turn had been directly influenced by Aristotle. Therefore, even though the stoic philosopher argued for the presence of a female seed, it must be recognized that the infertility of this seed placed his theory directly in the Aristotelian tradition. Galen's view dominated western thought, in spite of the different theory of the neo-Platonist Porphyry, up to its reassertion by the Islamic philosopher Avicenna (980-1037). In the Canon of Medicine Avicenna presented another version of the double seed theory. While he claimed that woman did provide some sort of seed to generation he believed that it had only a secondary formative function, that is, it merely directed the filling out of the bodily parts which the male seed had originally formed. Therefore, Avicenna, like his predecessor Galen, did not recognize the equally formative role of the male and female seed.

The Islamic philosophers ~~also~~ made it possible for Aristotle's theory of generation to directly influence European thought. For centuries these philosophers had been studying Aristotle and writing careful commentaries on his texts. When they brought Aristotle to Spain, Latin philosophers began to get interested in this Greek thinker. Aristotle's works, in the tenth century, began to be translated from Greek, Syriac, and Arabic, into Latin. The subsequent availability of Aristotle's theories of generation had a devastating effect on future writing on sex identity. Maimonides (1135-1204), St. Albert the Great (1193-1280), St Thomas Aquinas (1224-1274), and Giles of Rome (1166-1208) one by one reasserted Aristotle's claim that woman had no seed, she merely provided the passive material for the seed of man in generation.

This theory of generation became the accepted view of the newly formed Faculty of Medecine at the University of Paris in the mid-thirteenth century. From there it spread to other academic centers in England, France, Germany, and Italy. It was not until well after William Harvey (1578-1657) discovered the existence of the fallopian tubes that Aristotle's view began to be questioned. However, by this time the study of medecine had been nearly severed from the study of philosophy by the division of the university into separate and distinct faculties. This meant that the eventual discovery of the equally fertile contribution of female and male seed to generation no longer directly influenced philosopher's theories of sex identity.

In early classical and medieval philosophy a discovery in medecine was naturally integrated into a philosophical theory. We know for example that Empedocles, Hippocrates, Galen, and Mainomides were all physicians and philosophers. Aristotle's father is also reputed to have been a physician. In later European history, however, the separation of medecine from philosophy led to the unfortunate situation in which medical insights no longer directly affected philosophical theories. In the present area of research, the discovery of the truth about the role of woman and man in generation still needs to be integrated into philosophical theories of sex identity.

In the first chapter I mentioned that contemporary evidence about the seed of woman and man suggests that both make an equally fertile and central contribution to generation. The seed of woman and man each contain twenty-three chromosomes of the child which carries forward the combined total of forty-six chromosomes. At the same time, woman's seed and man's seed move within a different context and along a different path. This difference is as central to their mutual fertility as is the similarity in their chromosomal structure. As mentioned previously, it is not possible for

two female seeds or two male seeds to produce a child. Fertility, therefore, involves the two essential factors of equality and differentiation.

A new theory of sex identity would need to reflect on the relation between sex identity and generation. Sex polarity, it would seem, tends to devalue the contribution of one or the other sex. In traditional philosophy, through Aristotle, the theory of sex polarity was seen to have devalued the contribution of woman to generation. In direct relation to this devaluation of woman's seed we find a devaluation of woman herself. She becomes something to be used by man, for his benefit.

In a similar way, reverse sex polarity devalues the seed of man. In an ancient myth, Amazons were reputed to have captured young men to use for the purposes of generation. Today, some reverse sex polarity theorists have even suggested that it is preferable to inject themselves with the seed of man through artificial insemination than to submit to sexual intercourse. In this way, the man becomes devalued and his seed merely used for the benefit of woman. In fact, it has been suggested that men might be done away with altogether by discovering a way in which women could fertilize their eggs (perhaps by cooling the fallopian tubes). The resulting child, however, would be an infertile female, and within a generation all further fertility would cease. These examples imply, then, that both sex polarity and reverse sex polarity contain a tendency to devalue the generative potentiality of one or the other sex.

The connection between traditional theories of sex unity and the process of generation is not as evident as that contained in sex polarity. However, there does appear to be a pattern when more recent theories of sex unity

are studied. It was noted that Plato gave little attention to the question of generative fertility. He viewed the material condition of humanity as unimportant in relation to the non-material world of the soul and the forms. From this it was suggested that sex unity appears to be accompanied ~~with~~ a devaluation of the body.

When we examine later examples of the sex unity theory as similar conclusion is reached. Descartes (1596-1650) is a good example of the sex neutrality derivative form of sex unity. It is significant therefore that in "La formation du foetus" he offers a description of generation which hardly mentions any differences between woman and man. His admiration for mathematics led him to describe generation in nearly geometrical terms. Therefore, even though Descartes considered the philosophical issue of generation he did not enter into ^{a discussion of} the rather significant material differences between the sexes.

It is not until contemporary times that sex unity theorists expressed a complete devaluation of the material aspect of human existence. Shulamith Firestone in The Dialectic of Sex suggests that the equality of women and men will only be possible when all children are formed within test tubes. While Descartes' description of the uterus took on the form of a living test tube, Firestone's theory advocates the actual use of these instruments to incubate the fetus. Her argument claims that any material basis for the differentiation of the two sexes ought to be eliminated.

From the above brief summary it can be tentatively seen that both sex polarity and sex unity fail to defend the two goals of equality and differentiation. Sex complementarity claims that this double goal is central to a theory of the identity of woman and man. Sex polarity devalues the woman, reverse sex polarity devalues man, and sex unity devalues human materiality. Sex complementarity, on the

other hand, seeks to maintain the double value of the ~~in~~herent equality of woman and man and of the central importance of an integrated rationality, materiality, and individuality.

Sexual preference and theories of sex identity.

Somewhat related to the study of fertility and sex identity is the question whether there is any direct relation between a theory of sex identity and the choice of a partner for sexual relations. Strictly from the perspective of logic it might appear that sex polarity would lend itself to a preference for sexual relations between men, reverse sex polarity to sexual relations between women, sex unity to bisexuality, and sex complementarity to sexual relations between women and men.

A cursory glance at early western history indicates that there was no early correlation between sex identity and sexual preference. For example, Plato argued strongly in the Laws for heterosexuality even though he was a sex unity theorist. His views stand out all the more because of the Greek context in which sexual relations between men were given a higher value than those between women and men. It is sometimes argued that Plato, though the myth of Aristophanes in the Symposium suggested a theory of three kinds of sexual relations in the descending order of value of man-man, man-woman, and woman-woman. However, a closer reading of this dialogue reveals that Plato is humourously using Aristophanes as a spokesman for a popular myth which he thought ought to be rejected in favor of Socrate's view that love which transcends sexual relations altogether is the most

perfect. Therefore, although Plato gave a low priority to sexual relations in general, he tended to defend heterosexuality as the preferred form .

Aristotle, the first sex polarity theorist also argued strongly for heterosexuality. Furthermore, because his philosophy concentrated more fully on the integration of human materiality and rationality, he gave a higher value to sexual relations than had Plato who devalued human materiality. Aristotle did not, however , make a correlation between a theory of sex identity and sexual preference.

Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179), the first philosopher to offer a developed theory of sex complementarity, was also the first to suggest a correlation between a theory of sex identity and of sexual preference. Her analysis divided humanity into four different types , depending upon the balance of humours and elements in their material condition. She considered the varying degrees of fertility , relative states of health, and different kinds of character of each type of person. More specific to the present subject, Hildegard in Heilkund analyzed women separately from men and then considered what sort of relations ensued between various combinations of types of people. Her analysis included reference to both sexual and celibate relationships.

Hildegard suggested that a man with too much fire tends to desire a woman primarily as a sexual object to possess, whereas a man with too much black bile tends to be violent and masochistic in his sexual relations with women. The man with the right amount of fire and air is the perfect sexual partner; Hildegard calls him the ' golden ediface of embrace'. It turns out that this man is also the best kind of friend for a celibate woman , for he treats her as his equal. Finally, a man with too little air desires to have sexual relations with other men or with ' boyish' women.

Hildegard also described four kinds of ways in which women respond to men. The first kind of woman needs to have sexual relations with a man to be healthy, while a second kind of woman is happy with men, but able to live without sexual relations. A third kind of woman has difficulty keeping men interested in her although she wants very much to be in a sexual relationship with a man. Only the fourth kind of woman is healthier and happier without men. Hildegard considers her to be unstable and rarely fertile.

Hildegard's philosophy is extremely important for the history of sex identity. She is not only significant for having considered the question of the relation between sexual preference and sex identity, she also is the first person to give a detailed description of the way in which differences among women and among men affect their sexual and celibate relationships. Hildegard attempted to develop a philosophy of sex complementarity which defended the equality and significant differentiation of women and men. It is clear that she regarded sexual relations between women and men, when they occur between the most perfect type of the members of both sexes, to be a very positive expression of this theory of sex complementarity. Therefore, she saw an important logical correlation between her theory of sex complementarity and heterosexuality

In contemporary thought, the connection between a philosophy of sex identity and sexual preference has been explicitly defended by both sex unity and reverse sex polarity theorists. Shulamith Firestone argued in the Dialectic of Sex that sex unity logically leads to bisexuality. In sex unity, there is no significant differentiation between women and men. It would follow, she argues that it ought to make no difference to a person ~~whether their sexual partner is male~~ or female.

The reverse sex polarity theorist T. Grace Atkinson in Amazon Odyssey claimed that the institution of sexual intercourse ought to be abolished. In this way, ^{she argues that} a priority to sexual relations among women would be reaffirmed. In a similar vein Mary Daly argues in Gyn/ecology that reverse sex polarity demands that women become 'woman identified' in all their activities. The theory of sex identity which believes that women are superior to and significantly different from men entails for her the logical correlary that sexual preference for women ought to be for members of their own sex.

From these few examples it can be seen that a connection has been explicitly made in twentieth century philosophy between a theory of sex identity and a theory of sexual preference. This connection has been articulated by both sex unity and reverse sex polarity theorists. ~~It must now be~~ asked what consequences this connection has for a philosophy of sex complementarity.

Sex complementarity logically gives a high value to sexual relations between women and men. Indeed it suggests that a long term sexual union offers an important means for discovering the fundamental truth of the equality and significant differentiation of men and women. Union ought to differentiate; or, to say this in another way, authentic union achieves differentiation. Women and men can learn to understand their complementarity precisely in and through their union in sexual differentiation. In this way the theory of sex complementarity can be seen as offering an opportunity for women and men which is lacking in either sex polarity or sex unity.

Sex polarity and reverse sex polarity devalues one of the two sexes. Sex unity devalues the materiality of

of both women and men. Sex complementarity, on the other hand, affirms the material, rational, and individual integration of the person in its male and female form. This affirmation offers an opportunity for the discovery of the mutual fertility of woman and men as equal and differentiated persons. This goal may be achieved after years of living together; it is not something which can be simply posited as common to all heterosexual relationships. Sex complementarity then must be understood not primarily as a beginning but more fully as an end to be sought in human relations.

The regulation of fertility.

When a woman and a man are involved in a long term sexual relationship, the question of how they will regulate their mutual fertility is always an issue. This has been true for centuries, although public debate on the subject has occurred only in the past century. Margaret Sanger (1883-1966) is credited with having brought the question to the consciousness of North America before the first World War. Since that time the issue of ' birth control' has been a constant companion to discussions of sex identity.

The philosopher Bertrand Russell^{in 1929} seriously considered the impact of mechanical methods of birth control in Marriage and Morals. ~~written in 1929~~. He argued that it brought about the equality of women and men, and therefore destroyed the patriarchal structure of marriage. In contrast to this affirmative assessment of one of the consequences of the industrial revolution on sex identity, Gabriel Marcel argued in Man Against Mass Society (p. 1951) that widespread use of mechanical methods of birth control reveals an increasing life denying dimension to human existence which ultimately leads to despair.

Although the regulation of fertility has been considered by philosophers, it still awaits a careful existential study, which I assess the ways in which different methods affect human identity in general and the identity of the sexes in particular. I realize that by venturing into this area, I am entering a 'highly charged' atmosphere, where emotion rather than reason usually prevails. Therefore, I would like to say at the outset that my remarks are not meant in any way as a condemnation of past decisions a person may have made about the regulation of his or her fertility. Rather I hope to merely offer a new perspective which could be considered by people who will be making decisions about this issue in the future.

In the following pages I will offer an existential analysis of different methods of birth control in the broader context of a couple which wants to practice a relation of sex complementarity. In approaching the question of the regulation of fertility through an existentialist perspective, I do not want to suggest that philosophical criteria be the only one used by women and men in deciding between different methods of birth control. On the contrary, there are other criteria which may also be important to a particular couple. Such criteria usually include reference to aesthetics, medicine, religion, economics, politics, and efficiency. Decisions made by a woman and man therefore usually involve much more than reference to merely existential criteria. On the other hand, the philosophical approach to this issue can bring out certain aspects of birth control which may be neglected by other criteria. It therefore offers additional information which can be useful to persons making decisions about the regulation of his or her fertility.

In the introduction to this book I suggested that a person is a combination of materiality, rationality, and individuality. It follows that an important task in life involves the search for the integration of these three aspects of human identity. If a person is in a long term relationship with a member of the complementary sex, then he or she is also directly involved in helping a partner achieve the same level of personal integration. In this context it is interesting to consider how different methods of birth control help or hinder the struggle for integration of personal materiality, rationality, and individuality.

The first area which ought to be considered is the question of who carries the responsibility for the method of regulation. Within the extreme of sex polarity, when a man may merely use a woman for purposes of sexual pleasure, it is conceivable that a woman would secretly employ a method of birth control to protect herself against an unwanted pregnancy. Within this same context it is also conceivable that a man might use a method of birth control to protect himself against the same undesired result. In both of these situations the relationship between the two partners involves a kind of deceit in which either the woman protects herself against the man or the man protects himself against the woman.

Within the model of sex complementarity, however, the notion of having to protect oneself against one's sexual partner does not apply. For if both partners truly accept each other as equals, the possibility of using one another or consciously deceiving one another is clearly contradictory to the foundation of their relationship. It would seem that within sex complementarity any form of existential deceit would be undesirable. Instead, the woman and man would want to uncover a more and more honest disclosure of self as well

as receive a similarly authentic gift of disclosure from their partner.

The question of existential deceit can be raised at an even deeper level in relation to the study of the regulation of fertility. Many forms of birth control involve the use of some form of deceit. For example, by taking the pill a woman decides to deceive her brain into making a response naturally triggered only by pregnancy. The brain releases a series of hormones which stops the release of the female seed. Or in deciding to use the IUD a woman chooses to deceive her uterus into making another kind of response usually triggered by inflammation or pregnancy. It is believed that this birth control method works by creating a reaction in the uterus which rejects a fertilized egg. In both of these examples a woman uses her rationality to deceive her materiality. This decision therefore interferes with the other goal of achieving an integration of individual rationality and materiality.

At this point it might be objected that deception can only occur between two conscious beings. This objection would imply that the concept of deception is out of place in a discussion of the relation between mind and body or rationality and materiality. I would be accused of making a 'category mistake'. While there is a certain truth to this claim, it seems that there is also an important sense in which we can consider self deceit in the context of birth control. A definite fissure occurs in personal integrity when continuous self deception is practiced. For example, to fool one's body into a reaction only normally associated with pregnancy is now believed to endanger health in the long run. However, aside from a consideration of medical criteria, I believe it can also be claimed that some existential damage is done as well. Through either the pill or the IUD a woman makes a decision to practice continual deception of

of her body. This continuous rupture of integrity within her person must have important philosophical consequences.

Another objection to the above consideration of deceit might be to argue that deception in itself is not always wrong. A critic could point to the use of inoculations or vaccinations in which the body is 'fooled' into thinking that it has a certain disease so that it can produce relevant antibodies. This idea suggests that in certain circumstances it is worth deceiving the body. I think that this criticism can be answered by comparing the two contexts in which the deception occurs. The goal of vaccination is to fight a disease, while the goal of sexual intercourse within a relationship of sex complementarity is differentiated union of the woman and man. Within the context of fighting or war, deception is allowable in certain circumstances. On the other hand, when the goal of the situation is differentiated union, deception is out of place. This would be as true for a person who lies to a complementary partner as it is for a person who intentionally practices self deceit. Therefore, intentional deceit is contradictory to the goal of self integration and interpersonal union.

Using the concept of existential deceit it is possible to briefly consider other methods of birth control which women tend to use. A tubal ligation can be interpreted as a deception of the female seed through blocking its natural passage. In a similar way the diaphragm deceives the male seed by blocking its natural passage. In the use of spermicides which destroy male seed we find the ultimate kind of deception of something which aims to perpetuate life. Similarly, the use of the DES or 'morning after pill' and newly acclaimed 'once a month pill' destroy the fertilized union of the male and female seed by prohibiting the development of enzymes necessary for its continuity. Of course, the most pronounced form of deception is found in the practice of abortion as a method of birth control. Here the fertilized union of the combined seed

of woman and man is physically detached from its necessary source of nourishment. This act is a form of deception caused by the woman towards the developing fetus which is not identical to her body, but is dependent upon it. The fetus who clings to the woman for life instead receives, by her decision, an act which leads to its death.

In all of the above examples the woman regulates her fertility though practicing some form of existential deceit. Either the woman deceives her own body, or she deceives the seed of the man, or she deceives the fertile union of her seed and man's seed. In turning now to methods which men use to regulate their fertility it is not suprising to discover that similar kinds of deception occur.

Men have often chosen an approach to their fertility which blocks their seed from being able to be joined to the seed of the woman. A form of deception occurs toward the seed itself through the use of a condom or vasectomy. While the former method is similar existentially to the use of a diaphragm by women, the latter is similar existentially to a tubal ligation. In both cases the seed is blocked from its natural route and dispersed.

Once again a critic might point out that a similar kind of deceit is practiced in by-pass operations or colostomys in which one part of the body which naturally functions in one way is blocked and directed to function in another way. The issue here is that deceit in this context is a good act and not something given to a negative valuation. To answer this criticism it is important to consider the context of the deception once more. In an operation to avoid the effects of disease, the goal is merely to keep the body functioning as efficiently as possible, whereas in birth control the goal of the sexual act is union with the complementary partner. It is only in the broader context of union that deception becomes a negative value. The production of seed and its release is part of the flow of the two partners towards one another, towards differentiated union.

Within this context, blocking the movement towards union on one existential level of the self contradicts the movement towards union on another existential level of the self. Therefore, the ultimate goal of integration is undermined.

Men may also chose to regulate their fertility through the use of ultra sound to reduce the amount of seed they produce. This method is existentially similar to the use by women of chemical pills to repress ovulation. In both cases the person uses their rationality to deceive their materiality. The body naturally produces and releases a certain amount of seed as part of its movement towards union and the potential generation of new life. When a person decides to limit this movement through a form of self deception he or she has opened a fissure once more between his or her rationality and materiality. This act undermines total personal integration.

The above examples of methods for the regulation of fertility have focused only on those for which either the woman or the man has exclusive authority. It is important to consider for a moment the philosophical implications of a method of birth control which demands the continued responsibility of only one of the two sexual partners. There is an obvious imbalance which this situation brings into the relationship. Where is the equality of woman and man when only one of the two has to carry the burden of the total responsibility for the regulation of their mutual fertility? This equality disappears in the heart of their sexual union, right where it ought to be most evident.

In a similar way the differentiation between woman and man also is placed behind a veil, for one of the most central aspects of the respective identities of woman and man flows from their different bio-physiological rhythms of fertility. When one partner hides this aspect of himself or herself the two persons approach one another in the sexual act as if there is no differentiation with respect to fertility. Either

the woman presents herself as infertile during her normal monthly rhythms of release of seed, or the man presents himself as infertile during each act of sexual intercourse. In using their rationality to hide the differences in their materiality, the woman and man chose to ignore a central aspect of their differentiation.

It can be said then, that in the above mentioned methods of birth control, those which are practiced either by the man alone or by the woman alone, the two key factors of sex complementarity, equality and differentiation, are lost. It would follow then that in addition to the question of the proper understanding of existential deceit in the regulation of fertility, there is also the question of how to find a method of birth control which will foster and deepen the equality and differentiation of woman and man rather than interfere with and undermine their sex complementarity. By approaching those methods of birth control which demand the equal cooperation of woman and man we will hope to discover which method existentially supports the goals of sex complementarity.

The first method to be studied is perhaps the oldest one known to western society. It entails the mutual withdrawal or interruption of the act of sexual intercourse in order to keep the male seed from being able to have access to the female seed. Coitus interruptus demands the forceful use of the rationality of the man and the woman to halt the material union which was taking place. Once again we find the existential situation in which union on one level of being is fractured by disunion on another level of existence. The woman and the man in this way interfere both with their interpersonal union and with the integrity of their rational and material personal identities.

The second method to be studied was used extensively by the members of the Oneida Community in 19th Century North America. They practiced a form of birth control which demanded the withholding of seed by the man while he remained in the act of sexual intercourse. Coitus reservatus was developed through making a distinction between the animative and the generative functions of sexual intercourse. This distinction claimed that a higher purpose of the exchange of animative energies between the man and the woman justified the withholding of the material seed during intercourse. While this distinction is certainly useful in understanding the various levels of unity within an sexual relationship, it fails to recognize that the unity within the person is undermined by the practice of this form of birth control. An extraordinary amount of self control is needed for the practice of coitus reservatus, both from the man and from the woman. This self control can only be achieved through the rigorous use of individual rationality to inhibit the natural movement of the materiality which flows towards a completion in the act of union. Therefore, while it is true that the union of woman and man in this method of the regulation of fertility may be long and animative, a rupture in the relation of the rationality and materiality within the individual woman and within the individual man occurs.

The next method to be considered within the context of the equal responsibility for the regulation of fertility is the commonly named "rhythm method" of birth control. This method has often been promoted by religious, and in particular the Roman Catholic, tradition. Its ineffectiveness has led to its irreverent pseudonym of "Vatican roulette". On the surface, the rhythm method appears to promote the two stated goals of sex complementarity; it demands the equality of woman and man

and it works within the contest of differentiation of the rhythms of fertility of the two sexual partners. At a deeper level, however, it is clear that the method fails to account for the true material conditions of the woman.

The rhythm method functions by the apriori imposition of an average cycle of monthly fertility on all women, that is, by projecting the 14th day of a 28 day cycle as the moment for the release of the female seed. This a priori projection fails to take into account the variety of material differences among individual women whose fertility cycles may vary widely in relation to one another. However, ^{even} if a woman is able to discover her own average length of cycle, and thereby project the average day for her own cycle of fertility, her projection would still be apriori and thereby vulnerable to changes in her material condition through unexpected events. Therefore, any apriori method of the projection of ovulation ignores the particular materiality of a woman engaged in the world.

Ironically, it could be said that in the rhythm method the materiality of the woman often deceives her rationality! Her body fools her mind which had tried to predict its rhythms in advance. The man is deceived as well, for he agrees to cooperate in the regulation of fertility with the same apriori projections. Therefore the hoped for integration of rationality, materiality, and individuality is disrupted, and while the rhythm method sustains equality within the relationship, it misunderstands the differentiation as it actually occurs. Therefore the rhythm method, as a apriori method of birth control is not compatible with the goals of sex complementarity.

Is there any other method available to contemporary women and men which would aid them in the attempt to live out a relationship of sex complementarity? It appears as though there may be one. This method, while similar in some respects to the rhythm method, uses aposteriori rather than apriori means of determining the fertility cycles of the woman. That is,

it observes the actual changes which occur in the materiality of the woman's body before determining the moment of fertility. Called either the "ovulation method" or the "Billings method" of birth control, this approach functions through the observations of the peak signals in a woman's body which indicate that the release of her seed is about to occur. These signals are not difficult to observe, and they offer an infallible guide to the actual material situation of a woman at any moment in her fertility cycle.

The primary signal which the ovulation method uses is the change in consistency and amount of glandular secretions which occur in the woman prior to, during, and immediately after the release of her seed. The change is dramatic when a woman has been taught to recognize it; it offers a clear indication two days in advance, that ovulation is about to occur. It also indicates, with equal clarity, when ovulation has been completed. It is interesting to speculate that the increase in amount and change in consistency of glandular secretions during ovulation is what led the medieval philosopher Galen to ~~mistakenly~~ think that the female seed was only a glandular secretion! In any event, the perfecting of woman's knowledge about the signals given out by her own body today offers a new opportunity for living out the goals of sex complementarity.

The use of an aposteriori method of observing the rhythms of fertility avoids the problems mentioned in connection with the rhythm method. When a woman learns how to read her own body, her rationality can be fully integrated with her materiality though following its own patterns. This empirical knowledge can then be used either to generate a child when desired or to avoid union when such a result is not wanted at that particular moment. In both cases the woman and man may together make the decision which appears appropriate to them in the context of their long term relationship.

The goal of the equal responsibility of woman and man is therefore clearly affirmed though the ovulation method of birth control. In addition, the woman and man can existentially learn how they are materially differentiated. They can live this daily progression of equality and differentiation together. In short, they can discover at the deepest level of their bio-physiological identities the specific ways in which they are truly differentiated and equal. It is significant that the ovulation method of birth control has been as highly effective in underdeveloped countries as it has been in the highly developed west. Its practice is as accessible to those without money, capacity to read, or technological devices as it is to the most sophisticated citizens of the modern world. Therefore, it offers the unique possibility of becoming a universal method of the regulation of fertility for those who chose to live in a relationship of complementarity.

As the skill of practicing the ovulation method of birth control increases it becomes clear that the window to fertility occurs only four or five days each monthly cycle. This window then may become a central factor in the renewal of a long term relationship. Since over a life time an average couple might have more than three hundred periods of mutual fertility it is obvious that the window will need to remain closed for most of the time. During this closure, however, the complementary partner is fully visible and fully integral. When the woman and the man decide to open this window of mutual fertility the knowledge of their respective materiality and mutual integrity will only enhance the full development of the sought-for new life.

It might be suggested that the possibility of four or five days of mutual celibacy each month places a too heavy burden on a couple. It is sometimes argued that this situation can decrease their love for one another. However, it could be argued that the use of birth control methods which cut a person

off from his or her natural rhythms of fertility over the long run damages the mutual love of the two persons involved as much as, if not more than, the ovulation method. Specifically, there is some evidence to suggest that methods which hide the different relationship that the woman and man have to fertility, while attractive at first because they seem to offer the possibility of sexual relationships without the generation of new life, nonetheless in the long run bring a kind of sterility to the sexual act which is usually experienced as boredom with the sexual partner.

It is important to consider the deeper needs of the person when analysing the existential aspects of mutual fertility. A method which might be appealing for the short term could be very ineffective for the long term. However, within the particular perspective of a philosophy of sex complementarity I would like to suggest that the ovulation method of regulation of fertility is the method which has the greatest potential for developing a long lasting relationship between a woman and a man. It not only encourages the full personal integration of rationality, materiality, and individuality of each person involved, it also encourages the full interpersonal union of woman and man within the context of authentic differentiation and equality of responsibility.

At the outset it was mentioned that a person may want to use further criteria than merely the philosophical when reaching a decision about birth control. I would like to suggest that the ovulation method is also competitive in relation to the other listed criteria: aesthetic, medical, religious, economic, political, and efficiency. However, it is not possible to consider the broader questions related to these criteria in the present book, nor is it particularly relevant to the philosophical approach to sex identity to do so. We will therefore rest with the limited conclusion that the

ovulation method is the only one so far discussed which is existentially compatible with a philosophical theory of sex complementarity.

Other issues related to generation and sex identity.

The above analysis of ^{theories of} fertility, sexual preference, and birth control only begins to touch on the wide range of aspects present to a philosophical consideration of the generative dimension of human existence. In conclusion, I will suggest areas in which further study would be fruitful.

A study could be made of the philosophical significance of the difference in amount of seed available in woman and in man. Men generate millions of seed each time they are fertile. A woman releases one or two seeds each month from a reserve of over four hundred thousand seeds which she has from birth. Rather humourously this aspect of sex identity was recently used at a dinner of scholars at the Library of Congress in Washington DC to justify a sex polarity interpretation of sex identity. The eminent speaker suggested that by analogy with this biological situation a man is able to produce a plethora of creative ideas while a woman waits for her one idea to be fertilized by a man!

Another interesting issue involves the question of the relative activity or passivity of the male and female seeds. It is sometimes suggested by sex polarity theorists that the female seed is passive, and by analogy, woman herself is a passive being. Significantly, recent research has revealed that the female seed explodes up out of the fallopian tube and spins in a highly active manner. It has

also been recently suggested that what had ^{been} thought to have been a highly directed swimming motion of the male seed is more correctly understood as a non directed circular movement. These discoveries imply that the male and female seed are equally active in their movement towards one another.

A further issue which has been extensively discussed by contemporary theorists concerns the relationship between sexual anatomy and sex identity. Sigmund Freud, in his classic essay "On Femininity" argued that the female was a castrated male and that her sex identity was derived from an analogy with the passive function of her vagina. While this view has been carefully refuted, some reverse sex polarity theorists have argued, in reaction, that the vagina is a totally irrelevant aspect of woman's identity. Clearly a more balanced and accurate assessment is still needed.

It is important also to mention an obvious difference in woman's and man's relation to generation which flows from the fact that the woman alone carries the developing new life. Aristotle first considered this fact when he stated that the man begets and the woman bears. Pliny the Elder (23-79AD) suggested that the woman might be able to influence the development of the child by what she observed during pregnancy. Malebranche (1638-1715) repeated Pliny's claim and stated that a deformed child could be caused by the mother witnessing a traumatic event while pregnant. The philosophical significance of such a claim involves its suggestion that the mind of the mother can influence the body of the child. Nietzsche (1844-1900) was more concerned about how the body of the mother influenced the will to power in the child. He argued that pregnant mothers should take care to eat only the most healthy foods. These few examples show that a careful analysis of the philosophical implications of the different relation of woman and man to the developing fetus is still needed.

The nourishing potentiality of the woman and the man after the birth of the child is also existentially significant. Recently I was surprised to learn that a woman who is solidly in the sex unity tradition refused to allow the medical team to place her new born child on her lap after the delivery. She also refused on the same principle to nurse the infant at her breast. She stated that she did not want to introduce any factor in the child's experience which would significantly differentiate herself from the father. Of course, with more reflection I realized that this decision is perfectly consistent with the sex unity position. It would follow that an analysis of the ways in which the mother and father are existentially similar and different in relation to a new born child could be philosophically important to a theory of sex complementarity.

By the above few examples it is clear that a great deal of thought remains to be done on the issue of generation and sex identity. In this chapter I have only considered a few aspects in detail. In this way I hope to have shown the philosophical significance of this area of investigation. In addition, I have ~~uncovered~~ ^{uncovered} a partial foundation for the reaffirmation of the theory of sex complementarity which will be ~~presented~~ ^{presented} in the final chapter of this book. It is now necessary to turn to another area of consideration. The relation of woman and man to thought ~~is~~ is as important as their relation to their generative potentiality. ^{In the next chapter,} By selecting a few issues in the area of education, I hope to reveal the existential significance of this important area of sex identity.